

WORD
IN
SEASON
TO ALL IN
AUTHORITY.

WITH
Weighty CONSIDERATIONS

what PERSONS, PRACTICES and THINGS, doth
chiefly cause DIVISION and CONTENTION,
RENDING of KINGDOMS, and
DISTRESSE of NATIONS.

AS ALSO,

A Plain DISCOVERY of those THINGS and that
MINISTRY, that will bring BLESSINGS and
UNITY, with Deliverance from BONDAGE,
into LIBERTY; and instead of STRIFE,
WARS and FIGHTINGS, RIGH-
TEOUSNESSE, RECONCILI-
ATION and PEACE in
the Land of our Nativity.

Published by a Lover of Truth and the Kingdoms Peace, J. C.

LONDON,

Printed for Robert Wilson, at the sign of the Black-Sheep-Eagle,
and Windmill in Martins-lane. 1666.

WICHITA COLLEGE LIBRARY
FROM THE
ANDREW PRESTON PEARODY
FUND

Jan 31 1936

Donor

A VVord in Season.



You Rulers and Chief in Authority, I have Written this unto you, that you might Read and understand, what and who is the cause of Strife, and War, and Division, and Rending of Kingdoms, Governments and Common-wealths, and causing Distraction amongst people, and Heart-burning, and Murder, and Revenge one Brother against another, and one Neighbour against another. And farther that no Ruler nor Government, nor Government can be Established, nor firmly settled, until these things are removed, which is the Ground of Unsettledness, and which hath unsettled Kings and Parliaments, and divided them, and dashed them one against another.

Now they that Preach for Hire, and Divine for money, whose maintenance doth depend upon their Office, and their Office doth depend upon Persons, and Forms, and Times; so that if their Office be taken away, their Maintenance fails; and if their Form be disliked, their Office comes in question, and their Maintenance in danger; and through these Men, and these Things have been the cause of all the late War, and expence of Blood and Treasure. And all People who have trusted in them, have been deceived by them, and cheated and betrayed, and brought to misery, whilst they have feasted and been ready to turn with all Times to serve themselves.

For now consider, that before the Wars, when Idolatry and Superstition grew amongst people under Episcopacy, (so call'd) and prophaneity, and licentiousness became tolerated by that generation, and all the conscientious zealous people for God became persecuted, and hated and made a prey, so that it were a
A

hard matter for any man to live without suspicion of being dangerous, who made Conscience of any thing, especially in the worship of God ; But they who were Lovers of *Pride* and *Antioness*, letters up of *May-poles*, *Bull-baitings*, *Revels*, *Wakes*, and such like ; by which many people did assemble together to be drunk, and to Riot & Blaspheme the Name of the most Holy God. And if the Spirit of the Lord was grieved in any to see these things committed, and a Testimony borne against it by any) How were such made a reproach, their goods spoyled by the Officers of the then called *Spiritual Courts* ? and that kind of *Ministry* that tollerated and partaked in such wickedness, they were the men set up, countenanced and intrusted, and bore all the Rule amongst people every where ; and many years was the Spirit of the Lord grieved, and his righteous Soul vexed with these abominations, and often called them to return, but they would not hear ; but hardened their hearts in their wickedness, and went on in their Rebellion against God, until his wrath waxed hot against them, and the Contest began between the *King* and the *Parliament*, and increased until a great War began, as is well and by woful experience unto many to this day remembred ; and the *Bishops* being near unto the *KING*, and well discerning that if by force they were not able to uphold their *Office* they must fail, and their great yearly Revenue, which depended upon their *Office* would be lost, and they not doubting their strength, because of the *KING*, and the greatness of their number, forgot God, who saveth, *not by many*, nor *by few* ; and then they preached up the *KING*, and their *Office*, their *Form* of their *Service*, upon pain of *Damnation* to all that should resist them, calling them *Rebels*, and *Traitors*, and *Hereticks* that should oppose.

Another sort of *Clergy-men*, who were then something more refined, and were indeed many of them more zealous and conscientious, they prayed against the prosperity of the *KING*, and his *Party*, and against the *Bishops*, with the rest of their *Train*, and so when one *Blessed*, another *Cursed* ; and so men according to their affections sided, and both were upon pain of *damnation*, and here the Leaders of the people caused them to erre, and many thousands that were thus led were destroyed ; and with great difficulty did the War go on for a long season, and the victory inclining

inclining to neither ; But the *Army* of the *King* and *his party* grew numerous, and still they who were called the *Ministers*, ceased not on either part to Preach up the interest they had undertaken, though never so much blood might be shed in the prosecution thereof, untill the *King* and *that party* was worsted and overthrown : And then some began to see that it was not honesty, but interest that made them so eager ; So then they called *Ministers* of the *Parliaments* part, many of them seeing that their gain was in danger by reason of that prevailing party which then had overthrown the *King* and *his Army*, they (to wit the *Ministers* so called) began to drive on new designs, so that they can never cease fomenting of division, except their interest be at top and they themselves alwaies divided amongst themselves, by reason of their great number, that some of them alwayes wants room, so that they have leisure and liberty, ability and opportunity to devise *new stratagems* to carry on *new divisions*, that they may supplant one another to make roome.

But then when the *Army* had gotten the upper hand, and that the *Generall* begins to appeare as if he might be at the Stern, and that he countenanced those who at that time the Lord had opened their eyes, and they discovered the rottenness of them called *Ministers*, then they set themselves as it were wholly against him by all manner of means ; Labouring by Plotting, Preaching, and Printing against them, believing in their minds, that if he should once be at rest, and in full power, he would certainly have pluckt down their *Tythes* : So from time to time, the fear of loosing their great *income* on the one side, and the *Pride* and *Ambition* of the other side, they never in no time want matter wherewith to blow the fire of contention, still crying out against one or other sort of people that stand in their way, and so labouring to remove them out of their way by cruelty towards them, having time and opportunity to fill peoples hearts and minds with evil, by Preaching up the wickedness of their own hearts, laying it upon others whom they'l not suffer to answer for themselves, by that means laying such loads of bitter Persecutions upon people, that have forced many to be Enemies to those against whom they had no thought of evil, for who is there but will stand for his life ? So in that time when the then *Generall* had subdued them all, and brought

brought them into subjection, how soon did they *Court him* with *Flattery*, endeavouring to promote him to the highest honour, and so blinded his judgment, and he suffering them to breath a while, and not executing judgment speedily, their hearts had another mischief to devise, and so then preaching up *his Government* as *Jure divino*, and then both they that had joyned with the *King*, and stirred up people to fight for the *King*, and for the *Service-Book*, and the rest of that stuffe, and them also who had fought against the *King* and *Service-Book*, they soon became one, and they preach up *Oliver* to be *Protector*, and they all make use of his *Authority*, they tooke the *Engagement* against *King* or *House of Lords*, and so then he was the *only man*, and this was the *only Government*; But still there was a few people, who still saw their deceit and Treacherous dealing with all sorts; and these could not cease to make mention of it, their souls being grieved with their abominable deceit; and then they make it their whole business in all places to stir up the *Rulers* and especially the *Protector* to cut off such from the earth; and they labour to create *Parliaments* to their mind, and all sorts of *Rulers* to their mind, never ceasing by all means to cut off this people: But *Oliver* the *Protector* being by the Righteous hand of God cut off, because he had not executed the thing for which the Lord raised him up, but suffered the people of the Lord to be sorely afflicted, and the same *oppression* to remaine upon the free people of this Nation as before. His Son *Richard* he came in his stead, how then did the men called *Ministers* hasten with their addresses from their severall *Townes* and *Corporations* to congratulate the young *Protector*, and to give unto him the greatest title that could be thought upon? so that to some he was the *Orient Star* that was risen to give them light, and such like; and so having lifted up the young mans heart, they then thought themselves secure, and then they with him call a *Parliament* according to their own hearts desire; whom they thought were fitted to do the work which they long had desired, but when they had as it were brought that work to *maturity*, that was to have cut off all those from the earth which would not bow to *their Image*, the Lord overturned their *Councils* in one day, he brought up another people in their stead, into whose

whose hands the Lord delivered them; for that they (many of them) had long cryed against the *Protectors Oppression and Usurpation*, and had promised to execute the judgement which God expected should be done upon those who had kept his people in bondage; but they likewise forgot the day of their adversity, in which they cryed unto the Lord, and he heard them; and they likewise began to lay more *heavy Yokes* upon Gods people, and the Lord overturned them likewise, and ** Roted up Tybers,* set up *another sort*; but their hearts being not right in the sight of God, and had no mind ** The Committee of Safety.* to execute his judgement upon these who still held the people of God in bondage, the Lord gave them no rest, but brought in their Enemies upon them as a flood, his long-suffering being at an end, and the measure of their transgression finished, he hath now delivered them into the hands of their Enemies; that as the Lord sent his Servants to cry unto them, and to warn them, and they had no regard unto the sufferings of his people, yet the Lord often warned all sorts of them of the evil day that is now come upon them, and they would not hear, nor regard the cry of the *Oppressed*; but the men called *Ministers*, they preached peace unto them, and said *no evil should happen unto them*, and they cryed *that the Lord had not sent these men, but they were deluded*, untill sudden destruction came upon them, as is seen, even pain as upon a Woman in Travell.

And now what is become of these men called *Ministers* who (as I said) before the war, and in the war, *Preach'd and Prayed* against the King? who made it as it were their work, and the Cause of God, to fight against the King; the same men against the Protector, and for the Protector, who were so zealous for the Government of the Protector, that they imprisoned and whipped, and cryed out in the ears of *Magistrates* where ever they came, against a poor despised people, that they were Enemies to the Government, and were suspected that they met together to plot against the Government (of the Protector I mean,) and stirred up the *Rulers* and they got *Souldiers*, and they (called *Ministers*) with the *Souldiers* and rude people brake their meetings, and accused them as being dangerous to the Government, having a design against the Government, and so cast into prison, and all this

in

in Zeal to the Government of the *Protector*, and these were Ministers (so called) of all sorts, as well of them who had been formerly for the *King*, and those who had likewise been against him, were become one for the government, and one against the people of God, which discovered their deceit, and the *Protector*, as it was well known, and his government, was the only Man, and Government that stood in opposition both to the Person and Government of the *King*; yet all this, and much more that might be said, was then done by that sort of men in behalf, and by virtue of that Government, and these are the men that now (as it were with *one heart*, and with *one consent*,) Preach up, and cry up the *King*.

O you that are now *Rulers*; Are these men to be trusted? Are these men to be followed as leaders? Are these men to be regarded as to teach the way to eternal life? Are these men guilty of all the blood-shed in these Nations? Can any Government be secure whilst they are the men set up, and their wayes upheld after such a manner as now it is? Did not the *King* and that party follow them, and were guided by them in their Councell, and had their blessing, and were taught by them, that they were in the Truth, and that they should prosper? And did they not prove *false Prophets* unto them, and were deceived by them, and led into destruction? Whereas on the contrary, if the *King* had removed the Yoke off from the Consciences of people, and had set peoples Consciences free, and have had his eare open to have heard the cry of them who were afflicted by the Cruelty of the then *Bishops*, and their Courts and *Clergy*, and had eased the burthen from off their shoulder; why then might not the *King* have lived in peace, and ruled over the people, *and gone to the grave in peace*? And again, after, if the *Parliament* had not sought to enslave this people, and have brought a greater yoke upon the Consciences of those who sought after God in sincerity of heart, might not they have remained, and their names been honourable, and they gone *to their graves in peace*? and likewise the *Protector*, if he had done the thing he promised and engaged for, and had broken the *Yoke* of the *Oppressor*, and removed the *Oppression*, to have taken away *Tythes*, and set the consciences of all people in their Worship to God free; might not his *Kingdom*

dom been established, and his Name been perpetually honourable? For now consider, that it was never Names, as Kings, or Judges, or Elders, or such like that the Lord owned, nor the name of the thing one more then another, but the thing it self; that is to say, the Ruler called by what name he would; he that ruled for God, neither the right as by succession, or not so, if he ruled for God, he established him: as Saul whom the Lord chose, yet when he did not obey the voyce of God, the Lord *rent the Kingdome from him*, and gave it unto his Neighbour, for it is *Righteousness and just Judgment*, and the breaking the staffe of the Oppressor, it is this that establisheth the King and the Kingdome, and that King whose heart is wholly *set to seek the Lord in sincerity, and to establish judgment and Justice in the earth, and to remove oppression*, It is he and his Kingdome that shall be *Established*; and this cannot be done, as long as the men called *Ministers* are thus set over the people, and can exact by force so large a maintenance from them, for there is no sort of people whatsoever that can carry on *Plots and designs* to overturn *Governments* as they can, for they being scattered over all the Nation in every *Parish*, having so large a maintenance, they have leisure, and know the mindes of every person in the Parish, how they stand affected, and to whom, and they themselves under pretence of *Fasting and Praying* have opportunity to meet, and by that know the minds of every one amongst themselves, how they stand affected, and by this meanes they can *Poyson* a whole Nation, and leaven them with malice, against whom they please; for as is the Priest so is the People, or the most of them, who are their followers, and so then if their interest be upheld, they will uphold them that uphold it, whatsoever they are, they will preach peace unto them, and promise them prosperity, though the judgments of the Lord be at the doore, and their interest are so differing one unto another, that they one stand in the destruction of the other, for the *Old Protestant* so called, he cannot stand with the *Papist*, nor the *Presbyter* with the *Protestant*, nor the *Independents* with either, and the pride of their hearts, and the greediness of their gaine, that causeth them that they alwayes envy one another, for because of the greatness of their profit and pride of life, and the ease of their flesh, there is so many that seek after

it, and so this blinds the minds of them; (the God of this World) and so they cry up *that man* and *that Government* that will stand for them, and uphold their gaine though to the destruction of all others besides themselves.

So it is altogether *inconsistent* with the *safety of the people*, and the well being of the *Ruler or Rulers*, the *upholding and maintaining a Ministry* by a *forced maintenance*, It oppresseth the *poor*, burtheneth the *Conscience*, stirreth up *strife and Contention*, brings Gods *wrath upon people*, and that is the reason that so many of the *worst of People* get to be *Ministers*, because whether they be *good or bad*, if they love *Pride and Wantonness*, and *Lust*, and *Pleasure* and *Luxury*, here if they can but use a meanes, either *directly* or *indirectly* to get the place, they know their strength, whatsoever they are, or whatsoever they do, they are sure to be provided for, *having a Law to enforce it*; and so many people where there is any fear of God (though they are such as follow that kind of *Ministry*, yet when they see such a one loose and prophane) they grieve and murmur in their minds, and Gods Witnesse in their Conscience testifies both against *them* and their *Minister*, and troubles them, and so here is fear and doubt, and then they seek abroad for satisfaction, then the *Ministers* (so called) rages and he stirrs up the rest of the people against the man who is not satisfied in his Conscience under the *Ministry* of (it may be) such an *Ignorant, Blind, Prophane, Covetous, Proud, Unruly, Wanton Wicked man* (as a *Minister*) who they believe can never lead them, or reach him the way to Heaven, who himself never went a step therein, but is in the broad way to eternall destruction, and so *if the blind lead the blind (he knows) both must fall together*: So then the man called *Minister*, he preaches to the rest of his ignorant prophane Congregation, and he sets their mindes on fire of hell against him, and then he complains of him to *Authority*, and he hath enough to joyne with him to be evidence against him the poor man, and then under the Notion of an *Heresick*, or a *dangerous person or principle* to the Government, they proceed against him, and rack and torture him; and then all them in whose hearts there's any feeling or compassion or honesty, they conclude this man doth not deserve this, and that both *Ruler and Minister* hath not dealt well to punish after such a manner such an *Inno-*
cent

(9)
ent man, and say in their hearts, if this be their Law, how shall we live amongst them? And here division ariseth and increaseth, and the bond of peace is broken; but if the *Magistrate* be such a one as hath any zeal or tenderness towards God, and will not joyne with the *Minister* (so called) to invent a way, and wrest a Law to punish the poor dissatisfied man, but perceives the *Minister* to be such a one as rather deserves punishment; Then the *Minister* rages in his mind against him, and he secretly deviseth mischief against him, and goes to others whose ears he thinks will be open, and he leavens their hearts against the other *Magistrate*, and then what one will punish, or who one of them will punish, another will uphold and in time seek a remedy, and complains one against another to him or them that are over them, and here the bond of Government is broken, & here begins *strife, division and contention*, and *heart-burning*, & waiting for iniquity one against another, and so into *rents, and parties, and siding*. & till the *Ministry* blowes the fire, and drives on furiously, and it may be, get such a one to be cast out, and then he is dissatisfied, and many more, they see it is but for doing justice that he is so dealt withall, and then people feare how they shall live or be governed, when honest men are cast out of favour, and then whosoever is found to question such things, and the *Minister* (so called) heare thereof, he begins to threaten againe, and here is a Yoak which cannot be borne; but people will break it, though they break themselves with it; And after this manner have *Nations, Countreys, Kingdomes, and Governments*, been pluckt up; and now I appeal to any *unbiassed-man*, whose understanding is any thing open, whether these things, and much more that might be spoken of this nature be not true? and whether the men called *Ministers* be at any time with any Government all satisfied? and whether their siding do not lead people to side? and whether there hath been any war in a Nation and the *Ministry* (so called) had not the chief hand in it? and whether after one party is worsted, they are not the first that comply to that person or Government which before they might preach it damnable to joyne with? and whether they be not the most *Treacherous, Perfidious, Changable, Deceitfull* people of any sort of men? and whether the ground of all this be not the large maintenance which is settled upon the *Office*, and so a Law to force it? This makes them afraid

on the one hand, lest such a Party will pluck it down, and so stir up strife amongst the other, because they will hold it up; and when that Party can hold no longer, then they are the first that turn to the other, because they may be by them held up; for if they may be held up, there is no fear but to make them, or the most of them of any Religion that the Powers will establish; as was manifestly seen in the time of Edward the 6th. and Queen Mary and Elizabeth, where many turned from being Protestants to Papists, and from Papists to Protestants; and in our dayes from the Common-prayer to the Directory, and from the Directory to the Common-prayer; and this is well known, The same that Preach'd up a King for a Maintenance, Preach'd up a Common-wealth for a Maintenance, and a Protector for a Maintenance, and now a King for a Maintenance: And so I say again, It is altogether inconsistent with the safety of the people, and well-being of the Ruler, or Rulers, the upholding or maintaining a Ministry by a forced Maintenance.

So then the way to preserve the people in Peace and safety, and the Government in security from danger, and to establish it, is this, To give unto every judgement (so called) tolleration in the matter of his Worship towards God.

And that every Society, Congregation, or judgement amongst themselves maintain their own Ministry, in and after what manner themselves can or shall agree amongst themselves, and maintain their Places of Worship themselves amongst themselves; so no one sort of people should be burthened, nor their spirits grieved and vexed by another: But this, in this particular fulfils the Law and the Prophets, in doing as they would be done by; for the conscience of every individual man and woman ought to be free unto God, and none to have or claim Lordship over anothers conscience, and so that Government that settles this, the people under it (every one) watcheth for the good of them or him that governs; because by him, or them, they are kept in peace, and their consciences free, and so this, every sort of people, if they did but once taste a while, all people would delight therein; especially those who fear God, and cannot be injurious, nor seek the hurt of their Neighbours; and here every one might sit under his own Vine, and under his own Fig-tree, and this is so reasonable a thing, and so agree-

agreeable to the Scripture of truth, and to the Law of God written in the heart, that if it were put in practise, all mouthis would be stopped, and *envy* durst not open her mouth, and *strife* would cease, and *love* and *unity* amongst people would grow and increase, and the *Revengeful Murderous nature* amongst people would be starved and die within them; because they would want the *matter*, which is the *Law*, which forceth the conscience to feed it. And all they that now minde *earthly things*, that *serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies*, would be stopped, and have nothing to do, but to seek some *honest calling*, in which they might labour, and be *serviceable* in the Creation: And here, none but such who in *conscience* and *zeal* towards God would be *Ministers*; for ther's many who are now called by a *great maintenance* would then be without a call to Preach; for this *sort of men* do no good at all to people, who labour for their Bellies. Who do they turn from the evil of their wayes? But on the contrary they are so *perfidious* and *changeable*, Preaching up so much *Faction* and *Division*, according to their several Fancies, that they cause people to be *Truce-breakers*; for whatsoever Government comes that will serve their interest, and will do what they will *have them kill* whom they would *kill*, and *save alive* those whom they would *save alive*, that's preach'd up: But if any *sort* or *faction* of them be not countenanced, as that they cannot be, for one *must go down*, if the other *go up*; then they set themselves against that *Authority*, and secretly begins to *limite*, and so the same *Government* which they preach *up*, and all *Traitors* and *Rebels* which shall deny it, in a little time they Preach, and cry all *Traitors* and *Rebels* that hold it *up*: And thus the people under them, are carried by them.

For now, were it not that there is so large a maintenance settled upon them by a Law, which yet depends upon Authority; they would not be such Medlers with *Authority*, and cause such *Rumors* and *Divisions* amongst people; but because they are still in fear of losing that, or that *Authority* will countenance those whom they fear, but if the Law were taken away that forceth the Maintenance, then they that Preach, would Preach the Kingdom of God to people, and turn people towards God, that their hearts might be opened towards the Lord, and to his truth, that they that minister,

Net, might seek that which is lost; and which is driven away, and not seek the *Flock*, and seek to kill and destroy; and so when people were brought to God, and returned from their lost estate, they who were the Lords Messengers need not fear a maintenance, *For the Lord careth for Sparrows, and feedeth the Ravens*; and so these have little faith who cannot believe him, and cast their care upon him.

And have they not proved *false Prophets, Antichrists, Deceivers*, to all sorts of *Powers* that hath been within these few years? Did not they Prophesie *Peace and Prosperity* to the *King* and his *State*, and did they not *deceive him*? And when they were overthrown, and the *King* suffered, and his *Friends* did not they start aside and preach *Peace* unto the *Parliament* against the *Army*, calling them *Rebels*; and did they not deceive them likewise? And then did not they turn to the *Army* and *Protector*, and Preach'd *Peace and Prosperity* to them, and deceived them likewise? And now are they not turned to the *King*, and Preach *Peace* unto Him, and set all their old servants at nought? Surely there is not a *more dangerous thing* to the setting of a Government, then the setting up of a *forced Maintenance*; and that is the thing that the Lord expected should long since been done away: The continuance of which *Oppression*, and the many corrupt Lawes made and continued to infringe the *LIBERTIES* of the *CONSCIENCES* of the free people of this Nation in their Worship towards God, hath been the *Cause* of so many, and so great Overturnings; neither can there be any *true peace and settlement* in these Nations, until these things are removed out of the way.

For if a people were left free in their *consciencies* to worship God according unto that which God makes manifest, then all occasion of *strife* touching *Religion* were ended, and every one that fears God satisfied, and the breach made up: And likewise, if all *forced Maintenance* of *Ministers* were taken off, then both *People* and *Ministry* were free, and so that occasion of *strife* would cease, and that breach made up, and here every one would watch for the good of *him* or *them* that govern.

And so such a one, in whom the Lord laid a *necessity* to preach, would preach, but they that preach only for a *maintenance*, who are not *Servants* of *Christ*, but serve themselves which are the cause

(43)

cause of *Strife, Debate, Division, and Contention*, as is before shewed, their work would be ended, and then people would be turned from the evil of their wayes, because they that preach would be in *Gods Counsel*, and in his *power*; for now what ever people do imagine, they that will not preach without a maintenance provided and settled by a Law, these preach for a *maintenance*, and so they preach *themselves* and not *Christ Jesus* the Lord, neither are they his *Servants*, nor *Ministers*, nor *sent of Him*, neither serve they *Him* but their *Bellies*, and never can teach the way to life, or bring people into the way, but keep people out of the way, though they may have many enticing words which mans wisdom reacheth; for every one that enters into Gods Kingdome must be borne againe of the Spirit, and he that is borne againe must be begotten by the immortal living Word; now he that preacheth for a maintenance, *serves himself*, & is not *Christs Servant*, nor intrusted with his *Message*, but goes in his own *Message*, and abuses his name for a maintenance, and the living mortall word he hath not, which begetteth the birth that enters into Gods Kingdome, because he never sent him, and so people are not profited; but are kept out of the way to life by them, which hath the letter *so get a maintenance*, but hath not the spirit *which giveth life*.

And now I have not instanced the several *Governments* and *overturnings*, either to *justify* or *condemne* persons, or to meddle with that, as in relation to the great transactions which hath been in these few years; But this that they who now are in *Power*, who have seen and felt what hath been brought to pass that they might understand what the *Ground* and *Cause* is why these things hath been thus brought to pass, that so if the Lord give them understanding, they may not *split themselves* upon the same *Rock*, which *others* hath; for I do not look unto men, who have been the instruments, but unto the Lord, who hath all power in his hands, who in his Righteousness and judgment for his own glory, hath brought about these things; for I do believe that the judgments of the Lord are Just and Righteous altogether, and therefore, because of the multitude of transgressions of this Nation, and because the *King* and *his party* lightly regarded the cry of the oppressed, whose *Consciences* (which is the Lords Prerogative alone) was oppressed, and greater *Yokes* preparing by cruel Lawes; I say be-
cause

14
cause of these things was the hand of the Lord stretched out against them; and the party, who chiefly opposed him, being in their hearts no better than the other: therefore they both long were a scourge one unto another, and to the Nation; therefore did the Lord raise up another party, whom both the other hated, who were contemptible and inconsiderable, who as Instruments in the hand of God did *Wonders*, and overcame both, as is well known: But afterward they forgot the Lord likewise, and turned against him, and did not perform the Vowes and Premises which they had made unto the Lord in the day of their Distress, but corrupted themselves with the same abominations with which they were corrupted, whom the Lord cast out before them, and suffered many of those corrupt Lawes to continue in force, which they had many times (in their distress) promised the Lord, that they would take out of the way: To wit, *That they would set the Consciences of all people free towards God, and remove the great oppression of a forced Maintenance for Ministers*: Which whilst they did in any measure persist in, the Lord wonderfully delivered them, and cut off those that rose up against them: But when power was put into their hands, and they did not do those things, but became corrupt, and oppression, and Pride, and vanity, superstition, and Idolatry grew and increased; yet the Lord sent his Messengers, calling them early, and sending them often, warning them in the peril of their lives; but they regarded them not, but ill rewarded the Lords Messengers by many cruel and hard Imprisonments, and by making yet heavier Yoaks for their consciences: Yet the long-suffering of the Lord remained towards them, and not any of those Powers which the Lord overthrew, but he hath sent his Messengers to warn them, and to tell them in plain words what he was about to do: which things are in great measure come to pass, that all might know that the Lord hath a Prophet in the Land, and likewise that they might hear and fear, and learn Righteousness.

And now thus far hath the Lord wrought, and wonderfully brought those things to pass, that every eye might see, that his own hand hath done it, that he hath not suffered the sound of the weapons of war to be heard, what is it that the Lord doth now require of the men of this Generation? Friends, I beseech you in the fear of the Lord, consider whether that the things which are

now brought amongst you principally and most of all be that which the Lord expects, or whether he hath brought you up over your Enemies, because you are more Righteous then they? or *because of their unrighteousness the Lord hath delivered them into your hands*, that you might execute his judgments upon them for their Treachery towards him and his people? and whether the same God hath not still reserved all power in his own hands, and can at his pleasure cast you down, as well as lift you up? for this I say unto you in the fear of God, think not that these whom the Lord hath delivered into your hands, were greater sinners then you, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Do you believe that the Lord takes delight in setting up of May-Poles, and for so many thousands to gather together in so many places with whooping, shouting, drinking, cursing and swearing, and all manner of Wantonness and Licentiousness? Is the Lord God honoured by these things? is the King honoured by any of this? Consider, hath not the Lord raised in judgment this Nation, as I have before shewed, and overturned the workers thereof in former dayes, and do you think he now approves of it? Do not deceive your selves, God is not to be mocked; and do you think now since *the Lord hath overturned those who formerly hath afflicted us*, as he had promised, and is rewarding them according to their works? Do you think that you do God service to kill us? Take heed of bringing any of our innocent blood upon you.

And therefore this I say unto the King, who is now proclaimed, and that party who hath been for him constantly, I say unto them, that we ought to be protected under him in *peace and safety*, and in *equity* to have these just things granted which we stand for; for now ever since the death of his Father, we have been as well as him and them sufferers under the powers that hath been set up, and that especially in the dayes of the *Protector*, since the name of *Quaker* was given unto us: Who was there amongst the many *say themselves* that can now cry with their mouths, and their lips, a KING, a KING, make *Bartholomew* and such folly that dust open their mouths when he ruled to *bring* a testimony against his oppression, but joynead with him in his *Governments*, and did partake with him in his oppression, and cryed against us in his ear, and caused *many cruel Laws* to be made against us then before, not a

Prison I believe in this Nation free, but some or other of us have been committed, and many of us as being *dangerous* to his Government, and yet these men I say, many *ten thousands* of them that have thus done, are the only men to cry up a *KING* to destroy us as dangerous likewise to his Government, thus endeavouring to cover their *own unrighteousness* by rendering us *evil*; never ceasing to seek our blood. For this let it be known unto you, that we are not for *Names* or *Titles*, or for these names to set them up above the nature of the thing, for it is the Magistrate that rules for God, that executeth *true judgment* and *justice* in the earth, who hath his eate open to the cry of the oppressed, and is ready to break the staffe and strength of the oppressor. It is such a one whom God will honour, and whose Kingdome the Lord will establish.

Therefore friends do not hearken unto *flatteries*, and they who for their own advantage speaks fair, for they may *deceive you*, but let your ears be open unto *reproof*, for that *cannot hurt you*: and be not offended at any time with those that speak the truth. How many thousands have erred and perished by *flatterers*, but whoever that did hearken to *reproof* did amiss? for now the things that we are against is *every appearance of evil*, and the things that we are for, is *Righteousness* and *just judgment*, and unto this shall we stand whatsoever may be our Portion, for why now may not we as justly expect to be eased by the *KING* now the Righteous hand of God hath removed them, by which both *HIM* and *US* were sorely afflicted, and since we both together suffered under *them*, why is it not just that we with him should enjoy our *Liberty*? for indeed we cannot flatter with any, yet this we say, that there is *no people*, nor *no principle* amongst people profess, that doth tend more, neither so much to the *true honour* of the King as we do, for now it is they that fear the Lord, *truly honour the King*, for for (as I have said) the King is not honoured *where the fear of God is wanting*; But where the Subjects in a Nation walk in the fear of God, and know *Christ the King of Righteousness* to rule in their hearts, by which the *Lust* (which is the ground of wars and strife) which *War in the Members comes to be destroyed and subdued*, such can by no meanes be otherwise, but to the honour of the King; for if the King rule for God, and tryes the sword upon

upon the *evil doer*, and praise such *who do well*, which is Gods Ordinance: then such who are in the Fear of God, and walk in Gods Covenant, the Law written in the heart, *these are the strength of the King*; for his Sword is against the evil doer, and the evil doer is not his strength; for God who is the higher Power, hath ordained him to be a terrour unto the evil doer, and to praise such who do wells; so the well doer is his strength.

For what is it that we desire, which ought not to be granted in reason and equity? The Thing that we desire (as to our selves) is no more then this, That under him we may live peaceably, and Gods Spirit in us may have the exercise of our Consciences towards God in all things; That no Law be laid upon us to force that from us which is our own: and in that case, both by the Scripture of Truth, and the Law of God written in the Heart ought to be at our own dispose; to wit, to maintain a Minister which we cannot own, or a Worship we cannot own, for *the exercise of the Consciences of people, is Gods Prerogative alone*, and whoever meddles with that to exercise Lordship over anothers Conscience, he is a Usurper and intrudes into anothers right, and he falls upon the Rock that will grind him to powder; and *which hath done so by many*, and if Gods Spirit have the exercise of the Conscience in all things, whose Spirit is a Sword to cut down the Lust that wars against the Soul inwardly, and destroys that in man which causeth war and strife without, and keeps the conscience void of offence, both towards God and towards man, whether such ought not to be protected, and cherished, and have the *Magistrates* praise? And no otherwise do we desire *Protection*, but as we live *peaceably* in the exercise of a good Conscience; neither do we desire these things *only for our selves*; but likewise, *that all others* who desire to live *peaceably* in all godliness, and honesty might enjoy *Freedom and Protection*; for a greater abomination or Idolatry cannot be committed, *then for people to be forced to worship that for God*, which they believe is no God, or to worship in the *Way* which they believe in their hearts is *contrary* to God, or in which God is not to be worshipped; for we do not desire, but *that others* (such as I have said) *that will live peaceably* may every way partake of the same Liberty, which we desire or expect. He that hath a Gospel to preach, let it be free like unto the

Gospel of Peace, not for money or filthy lucre, that so people may be turned from their evil wayes, and be brought from under the power of Satan into the Power of God, that Righteousness and just Judgement, may run through the Nation as a mighty Stream; That so him or them whom God shall set up over this Nation, may have his Throne established, which cannot otherwise be established; for, for want of these things hath the wrath of God been revealed, and his indignation poured out against these, who in the day of his wrath, after the Lords Long-suffering was over, is now justly manifested: And so now this is written in short to no other end, but that these things may be taken out of the way, which Gods Wrath and Vengeance is against: That so the Wrath of God, may be turned away from this Nation, and that the Ruler or Rulers thereof, might be firmly established; and this is the true end, and no other for which it is done.

And now unto all those who in honesty of heart shall read this, let them honestly consider, that those who are now set up, who were of late *Sufferers, exiled and banished*, that what deliverance is now wrought is no way the price of their blood; for whilst they strove that way, they were continually overthrown from time to time; but that the Power and the Glory might be the Lords, and that all might be returned unto him; the Lord hath made bare his own Arm, & hath brought this thing to pass, that he himself might have the Glory, and whether as well *for our sakes*, whose innocent blood-shed in the time of Peace within these last seven years, many Goals and other places can testify, besides the many beatings, stockings, whippings, and cruel imprisonments of us, for nothing but for crying against *sin and oppression in Rulers, Magistrates, Priests and People*. I say whether from those multitudes of cruel wrongs done against us by those *late Powers*, we may not now justly expect *ease*, and the redress of our grievance likewise, as well as others, who then by the same powers were made sufferers? since it is so just and so reasonable a thing, that we do desire, we seek no high Places, Promotion, nor *Worldly glory* amongst men: We seek no revenge as to our selves, upon any Person or People, but that we may be protected in the exercise of our *Conscience*, (which is the Lords Prerogative) in our Worship towards God; and that we may be freed from all *unjust Lawes* that blind-

eth

all the Consciences of Gods free people, that he hath bought with his own blood, that as *Sojourners* in our own Nation, we might dwell in safety as to our outward man, as long as we live peaceably, in all godliness and honesty. And since the Lord hath visited you, and hath returned your Captivity, and is setting your Feet upon the Neck of your Enemies, thus much doth the Lord require of you, *That you deliver His people, and unloose their Bonds, and break every Yoke that oppresseth them*; for this is all that we desire, that we may walk in the way of our God.

And take heed unto your selves how you *set up*, or go about to *establish* that which Gods wrath hath been made manifest against, and *hath pluckt down*, both *it* and them that *did uphold it*; for the Lord he is God and changeth not, and his fury and his anger is against it still, and take heed how you continue that, or suffer it to stand, which is not yet cast down, which the Lords wrath hath been of late manifest against the upholders of, whom he sent his servants unto, and warned and testified from time to time, what it was the Lord required, and what it was his judgment was against if they disobeyed, which is fulfilled and fulfilling; and now it is your time to work whilst you have the day to labour in, before the night; If there be a heart amongst you to do any thing for the Lord, and for his people, in return of the large love of God made manifest unto you, for the day of deliverance draweth near, and all sorts have had a day, and a price put into their hands, but had not hearts to use it, *And the Lord hath sworn them in his wrath, and vowed them in his fury destruction*. And the day of your Tryal is come, and a time you may have now, after the Lord hath driven you away, and chastised you with his Rod, for your former *Idolatrous, Vain Superstitions*, and for your *Pride, Vain-glory*, and many other great abominations which reigned amongst you; and if upon your return you forget the day of your distresse, and so set up those things again and return in your former sins, and drink iniquity with greediness, what can you think will be your end, but that *shame and confusion* must cover you, and if you will force people to any *Fatms of Heathen*, and bind them to that, so that Gods fear shall be taught by *mens Practices*, the Lord will proceed as formerly, to work wonders, *Even to destroy the wisdom of the wise, and to bring to nothing the understanding*

ding of the prudent; and when Counsel and Understanding is hid, then you will grope as in the dark, and seek the way, but shall not find him: and so misery will come upon you, as upon them that went before you: Therefore be wise in time and take Counsel, and advise amongst your selves; for you may see that *these which conquer'd you with the sword, are now conquer'd without a sword*; Consider whereby they conquer'd; and whereby they fell.

The Lord is now come to Challenge His own Heritage of the Children of Men; that is, the exercise of the peoples Conscience which is his Throne and Dominion: and he will cast out, destroy and lay waste all Usurpers, that hath or shall usurpe Authority in His Kingdom; for it is his own, and if he by his own strength give unto others their Right, he will undoubtedly take his own Kingdom to himself; and if men will keep him out, if those to whom he hath let his Vineyard beat his servants and kill his Son, and think the Inheritance shall be theirs; yet the Lord of the Vineyard will come at a time when they are not aware, and all these who would not deliver up the Vineyard must be brought out, and slain before his Face as his Enemies.

And so as one who desires with my whole heart, that the breaches of this Nation (my Native Country) might be healed, and might come to enjoy true rest, and might be the glory of all the Nations, that the blessing of the God of Heaven might be upon it, day and night, to water it, that the Rulers thereof might be established, and their seed after them, that they may be honourable in their Life, and renowned in their death unto Posterity; that ignominy and shame may not follow them; I have cast in my Mite according to the ability which God hath given me, to that very end in the sincerity of my Heart, well knowing, that untill Judgment and Justice be established; and the Yoke of Oppression and Cruelty be broken in pieces, and the oppressed set free; the Land cannot enjoy her Sabbaths; neither can the Righteous rejoice; untill which time there shall be nothing firm nor lasting, but heaps of Confusion and tossing to and fro, as a Ship driven with a tempest which hath lost her Rudder, and so fear, and despair, and distrust will be amongst

The Conclusion.

THe Lord will thresh the Mountains, and come down, that the Inhabitants of the earth shall tremble thereat. For it is his determination to purifie the Sons of *Levi*, and to purge and cleanse the house of *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, that they may be a *Royal Priesthood*, a *peculiar people*, a *chosen Generation* to the Lord for ever, the people of his praise, the Glory of Nations, the Subjects of Christs Kingdom, which shall be established in Righteousness on the top of all the Mountains of the earth, which now are risen up against the *Lam* and *his followers*, whose government in truth shall stand over all the Heathen round about; for it is his right to reign, and he will not give his Kingdome to another; Glory to our God for evermore, who hath chosen the weak things of the earth to confound the strong, by things that are not to bring to nought things that are, that the Wisdome of the Wise shall be confounded yet more and more, and the understanding of the prudent turned backward. That all Nations may see that there is no confidence in *Princes*, nor in the *Arms of Flesh*, which is but as grass before the Lord God Almighty, who is exalting his only begotten Son *CHRIST JESUS*, the *Light of the world* to be King of the Nations, who is the *right God* over all, blessed for evermore, the King of Saints, whose Kingdome is not of this world, but in Righteousness and truth over all: In which he with his followers the redeemed ones of the earth make war, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and spirituall wickedness in high places which leads men to destruction, going on Conquering, and to conquer, untill all his enemyes are subdued, that he alone may rule and reign in the earth, whose right it is to have the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possessions, the earth being the Lords and fulness thereof, though other Lords have had dominion, whose right it is not to reigne: But the high and lofty ones that are exalted above the fear of the Lord, they shall be brought down, overturned and broken to pieces,

pieces, and the meeke of the earth they shall be exalted, who have chosen the foolishness of the Croſs of Chriſt before an earthly Crown which periſbeth and commeth to nothing; and all the greatneſs and glory of Kingdomes ſhall fade as graſs before the preſence of the Lord and the Lamb, who is come, and coming in flames of fire to be revealed, to conſume and burne up the wicked before him; for he hath determined a ſpeedy Conſumption in this Nation of all Powers, Things, and Governments that are ſet up, and ſtand not by the Authority of his eternall ſpirit, which is the rule of Saints, the heirs of Gods Kingdome: And bleſſed are they whoſe names are written in the Lambs book of life, that are faithfull and true to the testimony of Jeſus, the Lamb, followers they only ſhall reign. And all likenesses and ſaſe Coverings of *Anti-chriſt* ſhall be ſtrip off and confounded, and no longer hide him and his followers from the wrath of the Lamb, whoſe day is come in which his ſierce wrath ſhall be known againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men whatſoever, under what forme or notion ſoever without the life and power of *God*, in which his Kingdome conſiſts, which indureth and abideth for ever, in which our peace and ſafety is; though the Heathen rage, and the people imagine a vaine thing, yet they ſhall know that the Lord *God* omnipotent ruleth and reigneth in the Kingdomes of men, and giveth them unto whomſoever he will; The time is come, and for the Elects ſake, he will cut ſhort the work in Righteouſneſs, and terrible ſhall that day be which is nigh at hand, wherein the Lord will ſweep the Land of evildoers, and execute his ſierce Wrath and Vengeance upon the Workers of Iniquity, of which the Land is full, that the Lords Spirit is weary to bear them.

The Lords decree is gone forth, and he will fulfill it, That a King ſhall reign in Righteouſneſs, and all they that will not have him to reign over them, ſhall be brought forth and ſlaine before him, the Vials of his wrath are made ready to be pouered out upon this wicked Generation of men, who reject Chriſt Jeſus the light of the World to be their King and Law-giver, he is come a light into the world, that men through him might believe and be ſaved, but they would none of his Counſell, Power, nor Kingdome, but have hardened their hearts, ſtiffened their necks, and have choſen their own wayes, and the Luſts and imaginations of their own

hearts have they followed, which are evil continually, the Counsell of the wicked have they embraced, which leadeth down to the Chambers of death, and Hell, where their Portion shall be for ever, unless they repent and turn from darkness to the light, against which all the world combines, and make strong the bonds of the wicked, because it shewes men the evil of their wayes, and bring the sinner and ungodly to judgment.

How foolish and unwise is the people of this generation, to neglect so great Salvation as the living truth of our God, and choose to themselves a thing of nought, dumb Idolls, that can neither see, nor goe, nor speak, unto which the Beast and false Prophets with their fellows fall down and worship, for whom the Lake of fire is made ready, into which they shall be cast alive; the Bed of Torment is ready made for *Babylon* and her Merchants, and the Kings of the earth shall mourn, who have traded on her Merchandize, and drunk the cup of her Fornications. A day of bitter lamentation and howling is at hand, for that great Whore the Mother of *Harlots* that hath drunk the blood of the Saints: And the Priests and false Prophets of this Nation shall be known and made manifest to be of the chiefeest of her Merchants under the deepest coverings of *Antichrist*, who have long stolen the words of the true Prophets, Christ and the Apostles, and sold them for unjust gaine with the divinations of their own braines, that by their lyes and lightnes the people have perished (under the highest forme of words) for want of the knowledge of *God* and of *Christ*, whom *to know is eternall life*, without which they are dead in sins and trespasses.

This painted *Harlot*, great are her sins, and great shall be their Plagues and Judgments from the Righteous hand of the Lord God, who will have the Nations know that he is become the Teacher of his people himself, and will send forth Pastors after his own heart, in the power of his eternall spirit, to make war with the Nations, before whom the Heathen shall be confounded, and the powers of the earth broken to pieces, as a Potters Vessel. A day of Tryall is at hand, and judgment beginneth at the house of God that the Lambs followers may be known, who are chosen faithfull and true, that deceit and Hypocrisie (the mystery of iniquity) may be made manifest, that they that are called Jewes, and are not,

may

may be discovered, that such as have a name that they live, yet are dead under the Covering of the profession of truth, yet out of the life and power, may be made naked and bare before the Lord, who hates Hypocrisie as a most abominable thing, and loves and requires truth in the inward parts, and with such he delights to dwell for ever, who in faithfulness follows the Lamb whithersoever he goes, who doth the will of God, in whom the Father is well pleased, on whom the Government is laid, which shall stand sure and firme for ever, against which, neither the powers of darkness, nor the gates of Hell shall prevail, and blessed are they who are made Subjects of his Government, who rules and raignties in Righteousness; for they shall find mercy, and a sure Rock of defence in the time of stormes and bitter Calamity which is comming upon the wicked, who drink iniquity as water, and hasten to fulfill their measures, raging in the fires of their Lusts, the smoak whereof is ascended up even to Heaven, that the Lord God is provoked with this wicked and adulterous Generation, who wallow in their iniquities, and have not *God* in their thoughts; that his soul is weary to bear them, his spirit is grieved, and his patience and long suffering is almost at an end towards the people of this Nation, that have rejected the Lord and his wayes, and have chosen lyes and vanities, by reason whereof, the Land mounnes, and the cup of the Lords wrath is full ready to be poured forth upon this Rebellious and gainfaying people, who will not repent and return, but run on in the broad way that leads to destruction, death and hell being ready to receive them, against whom the fire of the Lords wrath and indignation is kinded, and shall not cease untill they be utterly consumed, *Tophet* is prepared for them of old that repent not and give *Glory to God*.

And the Nations shall know that *he that was dead is alive*, and behold he liveth for evermore to execute Righteous judgments upon the workers of iniquity, for which he is come into the world, even for judgment, through which *Sions* Redemption is to be known, the place of *Gods* Habitation, the Temple made without hands, pure and undefiled, the Spouse, the Lambs Wife, which brings forth that which is begotten of *God* to his prayse and glory for evermore. And blessed are they that are found so doing, which are the remnant that shall be saved by the Lord, when the

overflowing ſource of deſtruction ſhall come upon the wicked.
 Oh *England, England*! thou who killed the Prophets, and ſtoned
 them with ſtones, how often would the Lord have gathered thee,
 even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens, but thou wouldeſt not!
 and how glorious mighteſt thou have been in the fight of all the
 Nations, if thou hadſt conſidered and known the things of thy
 peace in the day of thy viſitation, wherein the Lord hath viſited
 thee with the day ſpringing from on high, with his rich and living
 mercyes, and thou mighteſt have been the firſt fruits of Faith and
 Reformation to the end of the whole earth. But as thou haſt re-
 ſected and reſuſed to drink the Cup of Gods Salvation, ſo thou
 mayeſt as the Nations, expect to drink the bitter cup
 of Gods wrath and Indignation, that the Inhabitants of the Earth
 may learn Righteouſneſs, and fear and tremble before the mighty
 God of Jacob.

27th day of the third month

1660.

THE END.

